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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SEVEN MEMBERS OF “STRAW PURCHASING” ARMED
ROBBERY RING INDICTED**

PHILADELPHIA – United States Attorney Pat Meehan today announced the unsealing of a twenty-eight-count indictment¹ charging seven defendants with illegally purchasing firearms so that they could use the weapons to commit armed robberies of fast food restaurants and banks in and around Philadelphia. Andre Henry, Leon Henry, Richard Holland, Gregory Clay, a/k/a “George Clay,” Nakita McQuay, Tameka Niblack and Starlene Herbert are charged with numerous firearms and robbery offenses along with attempting to hire someone to murder a federal witness. Joining Meehan in today’s announcement were Mark Potter, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham, and Philadelphia Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson.

The indictment alleges that from August 2003 through October 2004, Andre Henry, Leon Henry and Richard Holland recruited women who had no criminal records and paid them to purchase firearms from local gun shops. Andre Henry, Leon Henry and Richard Holland all were previously convicted felons and are prohibited from possessing any firearms. Instead, they paid to have the women’s identification restored and trained these women to operate the firearms so that they would not be questioned by the store clerks when they went to purchase the guns. In total, Andre Henry, Leon Henry and Richard Holland purchased eight firearms, which included 2 semi-automatic handguns, 3 rifles, 2 shotguns, and 1 AK-47 assault rifle. Five of the eight weapons were later found in Andre Henry’s home on October 21, 2003, during a search by Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

“If you buy a gun and give it to a felon, you’ve committed a crime,” said Meehan. “It’s called ‘Lying and Buying’ and it carries a potential 10-year prison sentence.”

Once they had the firearms, Andre Henry, along with other defendants, then used them to

¹ An indictment is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

commit armed robberies of local fast food restaurants. Andre Henry is also charged with using the AK-47 assault rifle to try to car jack a Lexus on August 27, 2003, and shooting at a Philadelphia Police officer while trying to get away. Additionally, it is alleged that Andre Henry used that same AK-47 assault rifle to rob the Pulaski Savings Bank at 2352 Orthodox Street in Philadelphia on September 18, 2003, and again on September 29, 2003.

By October, 2003, Andre Henry, Richard Holland and Gregory Clay had agreed and planned to rob a third bank, the First Penn National Bank on Midvale and Henry Avenues in Philadelphia. Henry and Clay were to enter the bank, and Holland was to be stationed outside with orders to shoot anyone who interfered with the robbery. Fortunately, state parole officers arrested Andre Henry before the bank could be robbed.

While the federal grand jury was investigating these crimes, Andre Henry learned of the investigation and attempted to hire someone to murder at least one of the witnesses who testified before the grand jury. Those conversations were captured on tape by agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

This indictment is part of Project Safe Neighborhoods, an initiative by the United States Attorney's Office, Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, to identify and prosecute firearms offenders in federal court, where the defendants are likely to receive substantial sentences upon conviction.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE DEFENDANTS

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE	MAXIMUM PENALTIES
Andre Henry	7400 block of Briar Road, Philadelphia, PA	27 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life imprisonment, with mandatory 107 years • \$7,000,000 in fines • 3 years supervised release • \$2800 special assessment
Leon Henry	1500 block of Bailey Street, Philadelphia, PA	35 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 years imprisonment • \$750,000 in fines • 3 years supervised release • \$300 special assessment
Richard Holland	5500 block of Laurence Street, Philadelphia, PA	28 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45 years imprisonment • \$1,000,000 in fines • 3 years supervised release • \$400 special assessment

NAME	ADDRESS	AGE	MAXIMUM PENALTIES
Gregory Clay, a/k/a "George Clay"	3800 block of N. Reese Street, Philadelphia, PA	45 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65 years imprisonment • \$750,000 in fines • 3 years supervised release • \$300 special assessments
Nakita McQuay	1400 block of W. Loudon Street, Philadelphia, PA	20 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 years imprisonment • \$750,000 in fines • 3 years supervised release • \$300 special assessment
Tameka Niblack	1600 block of S. Taney Street, Philadelphia, PA	33 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 years imprisonment • \$2,000,000 in fines • 3 years supervised release • \$400 special assessment
Starlene Herbert	5600 block of Ogontz Avenue, Philadelphia, PA	20 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 years imprisonment • \$250,000 in fines • 3 years supervised release • \$100 special assessment

The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, the Philadelphia Police Department, the Cheltenham Police Department and the Abington Police Department, and has been assigned to Assistant United States Attorney Michelle T. Rotella.

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